

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH,

FOR THE

URBAN DISTRICT OF SOOTHILL UPPER,

FOR 1897.

*To the Sanitary Committee of the Soothill Upper
Urban District Council.*

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my THIRD ANNUAL REPORT on the health of your District. The progress for the year has been steady, but there is still something to be aimed at, while better results can be shown in some other places.

The area of the district is 1897 acres, and the population according to the census of 1891, 5,848, but now estimated at 6,248, and on this my calculations will be based. It would be well if we could have an intermediate census to record only the number of the inhabitants.

The births for the year amounted to 180, 86 males and 94 females, giving a birth rate of 28·8, against 32·2 for 1896, and 30·7 for 1895.

The deaths for the year amounted to 107, 56 males and 51 females, giving a death rate of 17·1 per 1,000, against 18·3 for 1896, and 20·5 for 1895.

AGES AT DEATH.

	Under 1 year	...	...	...	...	31
1 year and	„ 5 years	...	...	...	...	23
5 „	„ 15 „	...	...	...	...	7
15 „	„ 25 „	...	...	...	...	3
25 „	„ 65 „	...	...	...	...	24
65 „	and upwards	...	...	...	...	19

You will see that 31 died within the first year of their existence, which is equal to 172 per 1,000 of the children born, against 125 in 1896, and 173 in 1895. 23 died in the second period, but this number was swelled by whooping cough, which largely prevailed in the early part of the year. The same number died 65 years and upwards as in last year, viz., 19, and 11 of these ranged from 71 to 83 years.

CAUSES OF DEATH UNDER ONE YEAR.

As the deaths at this age very much regulate the total death rate, and as the number that survives this age will depend very much on the vitality at birth and their surroundings, it will be interesting to note what these 31 babies died from.

Diarrhœa	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Thrush	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	...	..	8
Premature	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
Convulsions	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Debility	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
							<hr/> 31

CAUSES OF DEATH AT ALL AGES.

Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	...	2	} Zymotic Diseases.
Diarrhœa	...	...	...	...	4	
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	10	
Rheumatic Fever	...	..	...	...	1	
Phthisis	...	...	...	...	4	
Respiratory Organs	...	...	...	...	24	
Heart Disease	...	...	...	...	6	
Injuries	...	...	...	...	6	
All other causes	...	...	...	..	50	
						<hr/> 107

The zymotic death rate claims our first attention, and is equal to 2·5 per 1,000, against 2·7 for 1896, and 2·6 for 1895. The heaviest item in this section last year was due to measles, 2·1; this year we have to deplore a loss of 1·6 from whooping cough. Phthisis death rate ·6, last year 1·6; respiratory diseases 3·8, against 3·7 last year.

The following table will show how we stand, and teaches us that though we are gaining ground steadily there is still room for improvement.

VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1897.

1897.	England and Wales.	Thirty- three great towns.	Sixty-seven other large towns.	England and Wales less the 100 towns.	Soothill Upper.
Birth rate ...	29·7	—	—	—	28·8
Death rate ...	17·4	19·1	17·2	16·4	17·1
Zymotic death rate	2·15	2·87	2·41	1·62	2·5
Infantile mor- tality ...	156	177	169	138	172

In April last I reported that whooping cough was very prevalent. In July I brought to your notice that scarlet fever was largely prevailing. This latter complaint was with us during the last six months of the year. No school was closed, but these two diseases, together with chicken pox, had a very serious effect on the school attendance. It is worthy of remark that whooping cough, although not a notifiable disease, claims 10 deaths; that scarlet fever has 2 deaths and 52 notifications; and that enteric has no deaths and 15 notifications.

In most of the enteric cases no evident cause could be made out. The houses were drained and disconnected from the sewers, and the ashpits and privies in order. But proof is not wanting that there is a great deal of ignorance with regard to the use of the drains, and that night soil is poured into the gullies regardless of their own or their neighbour's health. In this connection many houses still require disconnecting; many open middens, the fluid percolating through the walls into the yard, require re-building and covering. While the new buildings have one closet to each house, some of the old are still insufficiently provided - one to four. In September I recommended flushing of the drains, and it is certainly much required as there is not a great deal of water going into the sewers.

Of all the notifiable diseases we have to deal with scarlet fever is the most hopeless without complete isolation. A few cases, very mild, are not seen by a doctor, and at the urgent calls of the School Board, they go back in the "peeling" stage and sow it broadcast. These would escape isolation. But, then, there is the habit of "neighbouring" which goes on, and must inevitably carry the disease from one house to another. Of the 52 cases reported I find that 21 occurred in 7 houses.

In order to give you some idea of the comparative health of the District, I have tabulated the infectious cases reported according to the locality, as follows:—

INFECTIOUS DISEASES REPORTED IN 1897.

DISTRICT.	Diphtheria	Scarlet Fever.	Enteric.	Continued.	Puerperal.	Erysipelas.	TOTAL.
Kirkgate			3				3
Oaks Road						1	1
Common Side		4				1	5
Soothill Lane		2	2				4
Spring Head Terrace		1					1
Whiteley Buildings, Leeds Rd.			1				1
Willow Terrace		3				2	5
Grace Leather Lane		1					1
High Street	1	1	2	1		1	6
Lady Ann Road		4					4
Station Road		3	1				4
Mill Lane		6					6
Bridle Street		1					1
Brewery Road		2					2
Bromley Road		2					2
Bromley Street... ..		5					5
Royd Street		9					9
Carr Street		1					1
Greenwood Buildings		1					1
New Street						1	1
Quarry Street		2					2
Chidswell	1	4	5				10
Lamfield Terrace, Leeds Rd.			1				1
TOTAL ...	2	52	15	1		6	76

The water supply has been good and continuous, and no case of lead poisoning has come under my notice.

The smoke nuisance has very little care bestowed on it. While it is so injurious to animal and vegetable life, it seems useless for one District to take the matter up and leave our neighbours to pour theirs upon us. United and uniform action can only be taken by the County Council.

To provide for the wants of our growing population 27 houses have been erected during the year. But only a few of these are what may be called family houses. From a moral and sanitary point of view more sleeping accommodation should be provided. There is a growing demand for such a house and such a demand could be supplied at little more cost by attending to the formation of attics. It seems a pity that so much cubic space should be sealed up to no purpose.

Trusting, during this year with improved sanitary arrangements, to have improved results,

I remain,

Yours obediently,

ROBERT BEATTIE, M.D.,

Dewsbury,

Medical Officer of Health.

12th March, 1898.

TABLE B.
SOOTHILL UPPER URBAN DISTRICT.

Population, Births, and New Cases of Infectious Sickness during the year 1897.

Names of Localities adopted for the purpose of these Statistics ; Public Institutions being shown as separate localities.	Population at all Ages.		Regist'd Births.	Aged under 5 or over 5.	New Cases of Sickness in each Locality, coming to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health.							Number of such Cases Removed from their Homes in the several Localities for Treatment in Isolation Hospital.
	Last Census.	Estimated to middle of 1897.			Scarlatina.	Diphtheria.	Membranous Croup.	Enteric or Typhoid.	Continued.	Puerperal.	Erysipelas.	
Soothill Upper	5848	6248	180	{ Under 5 5 upwards	52	2		15	1		6	Small Pox.

TABLE C.
SOOTHILL UPPER URBAN DISTRICT.

SUMMARY of work executed and other matters carried out in the Sanitary Department for
Year ending December 31st, 1897.

No. of water leakages and defective water pipes and fittings found and notices served.	9	yds. 112	No. of private drains laid and connections made with sewers.	14	68	14	No. of nuisances abated by request only.	No. of notices served for abatement of nuisances.	No. of prosecutions.	Remarks whether carried out or not.	No. of new water closets fixed.	No. of new trough closets fixed.	No. of new houses built during the year.	No of new privies built to new houses.	Additional privy accommodation to existing dwellings built.	No. of existing privies reconstructed on model principle.	No. of existing ashpits reconstructed and covered in.	No. of loads of ashes, &c., removed from ashpits throughout the District.	Average No. of times each ashpit cleansed during the year.
									3	42 notices carried out. 8 in hand Dec. 31st.	1	None.	27	25	10	61	18	2153	5.6

THOMAS FENN,

Surveyor and Inspector.